

CITY OF NEWARK, NJ'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Andrew Washington - November 24, 1997

Q: Good morning. My name is Anne Marie Dicky-Kemp. I'm an interviewer for the Krueger-Scott Mansion Cultural Center African-American Oral History Project. Today Monday the twenty-fourth, 1997, I'm at the home of the interviewee. The time is 10:30 a.m. Good morning. Could you please state your name.

Washington: Andrew Washington.

Q: Your date of birth.

Washington: June 27, 1928.

Q: Your place of birth.

Washington: Newark, New Jersey. City Hospital.

Q: What is or was your occupation?

Washington: I was formerly a teacher in the public school system of Newark and Jersey City.

Q: Are you currently still employed?

Washington: No. I'm retired.

Q: How far did you go in school?

Washington: Oh, I have the equivalent of a doctor's degree in education.

Q: And when you were a teacher, what was your, in what field did you teach?

Washington: Elementary, primarily elementary education. Although I did work as an adjunct professor at Brookdale Community College.

Q: Thank you. Could you please tell me the name of the person you married, when and where.

Washington: Gertrude Mounbow is her maiden name. Nashville, Tennessee.

Q: How did you meet your wife?

Washington: Oh, at a teachers convention in Atlantic City.

Q: How interesting. And how long did you know each other before you married?

Washington: Oh, for about several years.

Q: What kind of work did or does your wife do?

Washington: She was an elementary school teacher also. She's retired too.

Q: Mr. Washington, could you tell me the names of your children.

Washington: Pamela, Lisa and Paul.

Q: All right. And where were they born?

Washington: In Newark.

Q: And when were they born?

Washington: Oh, well, my oldest daughter's thirty-eight. And my next daughter is thirty-four. My son he's thirty. Born in 1967 during the riots.

Q: Could you please state your father's name and his place of birth.

Washington: George Patrick Washington. Anderson, South Carolina. I don't know the year.

Q: And your mother's name and place of birth.

Washington: Lois Ollie Chapman. Anderson, South Carolina also.

Q: Do you have any sisters and brothers?

Washington: Yes, I do.

Q: Could you please state their names in the order of their births.

Washington: Martha, Ollie. They're still living, all of them.

Q: You can name all of them. How many are there?

Washington: Right now they're four. Wia and Gilbert.

Q: All together how many were there?

Washington: Six.

Q: What was your father's occupation?

Washington: He was a laborer.

Q: And your mother's occupation?

Washington: Housewife and she did day's work also.

Q: Since you were born in Newark, can you tell me some of the areas in Newark in which you had lived?

Washington: In Kinney Street, near now Irving Turner Blvd. and Eighteenth Avenue, near Bergen Street. Then we moved over to Seymour Avenue. After I got married lived in Eckerd and Eckerd moved back to Seymour and then when I was married I moved to Chadwick Avenue. And then finally we moved over here, Ansbury Avenue. We've been here since 1967.

Q: Can you describe some of the housing that you lived in? For example, were they apartments, single or multi-family units?

Washington: Yeah, multi-family.

Q: All the ones prior were multi-family units?

Washington: Yes.

Q: Can you describe some of the neighborhoods?

Washington: Well, then or now?

Q: Then. When you lived there.

Washington: Well, most of the neighborhoods were, you know, like the mostly white, few black families that lived in the neighborhood, particularly when I was living on Eighteenth Avenue. I can only remember one other black family that lived close to us.

Q: Do you recall what the racial make up was of the other neighbors in the?

Washington: They were white mainly.

Q: Yeah. Were they?

Washington: Ethnic.

Q: Yes. Ethnics.

Washington: One family that lived in the house with us was Italian. We had Polish, Hungarian, Jewish. This was a European neighborhood. I don't know exactly in each case the geography, but these were white people.

Q: Do you recall where your parents would do their shopping?

Washington: Mostly in the neighborhood. There was an A&P store on the same block that we lived on. And then two blocks away from us there was Springfield Avenue. We did quite a bit of shopping on Springfield Avenue. Cause there were many different stores on Springfield Avenue.

Q: Were there many black merchants in the neighborhood?

Washington: None.

Q: What was mostly the ethnicity of the merchants in the neighborhood?

Washington: They were Jewish.

Q: Do you know if the local stores would offer your parents credit if they wanted it?

Washington: Sometimes.

Q: Mr. Washington, you had stated earlier that you moved to Hansbury Avenue in Newark in what year?

Washington: In 1967.

Q: What was the neighborhood like?

Washington: It was predominantly Jewish.

Q: And how were you accepted by your neighbors?

Washington: Cordial. They soon left, but there were cordial at the time.

Q: As a youngster in Newark, did you have any jobs while you were in high school?

Washington: Yes. I worked as a custodian at several drug stores and a delivery person. They were owned by Jewish pharmacists. Then I also did some custodial work at a produce store on Springfield Avenue.

Q: Where you educated at? You say that you were a teacher.

Washington: Well, Newark public schools. And then after that, I worked and then decided that I wanted to get more education, and I enrolled at Rutgers University College in the evening division, and I graduated from there with a bachelor's in arts history. And then after that, I taught in the Newark school system, I went back and got a master's degree in education at Newark State Teachers College which is now Kean College.

Q: So what type of jobs did you hold after high school?

Washington: Several factory type jobs. They were unskilled factory jobs. And then I worked at the library as an unskilled person in the order department.

Q: What other racial group of people were working along with you?

Washington: White people.

Q: And what were their attitudes?

Washington: I guess they were tolerant, cordial..

Q: How were you treated by your supervisors?

Washington: I think fairly.

Q: Did any of the jobs have a union?

Washington: No. Not that I recall.

Q: Do you recall, during your time period, what were some of the common occupations for black men or women in Newark?

Washington: Unskilled labor for the men. And for women, domestic type work.

Q: For those of your era, did blacks enter any new occupations?

Washington: Yes. They became teachers.

Q: Mr. Washington, can you tell me how active religion has been in your life?

Washington: Well, as a young boy, I can recall attendance at Sunday School at Abyssinian Baptist Church. Off and on as a teenager would go sporadically. But prior to being married, religion didn't play a significant role in my life.

Q: Did it increase after your marriage?

Washington: Yes because my wife was very much involved in the Catholic Church.

Q: Which got you involved.

Washington: Right.

Q: Right. I understand. How much have you participated in social and cultural activities in Newark?

Washington: Well, somewhat. To a large extent, cultural, social, I recall being a member of the NAACP in the 60s. And then a member of CORE. Several other. Voter Information Council. Those black organizations.

Q: Did you hold any position in any of these organizations?



Washington: Well, I was the chairman of the education committee of the Newark branch of the NAACP for about seven years. Also in CORE I had a similar position. At that time, we were talking about school integration. Back then schools weren't integrated. At the time the goal was to get the schools more integrated.

Q: What time period was this?

Washington: It was in the 60s. Cause prior to that I wasn't involved as I recall.

Q: When you say getting the schools integrated, could you elaborate?

Washington: Yes. We felt that certain schools were becoming predominantly black. This is because at the time period I'm talking about there was still a significant white population in Newark. And a goal of those organizations like the NAACP to integrate the schools. At the time we'd been aware that white folks didn't want to be integrated as much as black people thought they were.

Q: Okay. Now if I understand you correctly, you're saying that there were certain schools in Newark at that time that were predominantly black.

Washington: Yes.

Q: The students were predominantly black.

Washington: Central Ward.

Q: Do you know anything about the history of the organizations that you just mentioned?

Washington: What, the NAACP?

Q: Yes.

Washington: Probably. Started in 1910.

Q: And the other organization that you mentioned that you were a part of.

Washington: CORE. Yes, I know a little bit about that. This started out, part of this going cold turkey, this identified with something, another organization.

Q: Are there any other clubs or organizations that you wish to mention that you were a part of?

Washington: Not that I can recall right now. I did belong to the Community Corporation. I was on their board.

Q: And the purpose of this organization was?

Washington: Well, I think then to help poor people to realize some of the benefits we felt that they were entitled to.

Q: This would be like maybe medical benefits or housing.

Washington: Educational, housing and things like that. Also I was a member of the Newark Pre-School Council when it was first organized.

Q: And the purpose of this organization, the Pre-School Council.

Washington: That was to get very young people involved in education. Cause prior to that, they didn't think that these people could get an education til they started in these technical avenues, like pre-school and things like that.

Q: Okay. So this would be for children three to four or four to five prior to going to kindergarten?

Washington: Right. This is a new concept, you know.

Q: That they should be educated formally.

Washington: Right. Particularly poor people because I imagine that more affluent had situations where they had their children attending.

Q: Aside from being a consumer of regular goods and services, in what ways did you participate in the economic life of the community?

Washington: I don't understand the question.

Q: Did you own or operate your own business or?

Washington: No. No.

Q: Mr. Washington, how did you get information on the news and events of the community, that is of Newark? Did you read a black newspaper or did you listen to a black orientated radio station? And if so, which one?

Washington: Well, yes I think I recall reading the Pittsburgh Courier, which was not a local paper, but it had news that was of interest to me. And we had the Newark Herald News. I recall reading that for the recommendations as to Afro-Americans. At that time were referred to as Negroes.

Q: Were there any black orientated radio stations?

Washington: Could have been. Can't remember names now.

Q: Being raised in Newark, what was the relationship between black Newark and maybe other black communities in New Jersey? For example people from Newark, their relationship with people maybe in East Orange, Orange, Montclair.

Washington: Not that much. I recall. Other than having relatives, you know, who lived in these places. I was aware of the names of the places. But at that time, not that many black people lived in those places. The only place I used to hear about black people living was a place called Vauxhall and I thought it was always Box Hall. [Laughter]

Q: Box Hall.

Washington: I think black people still live there. I don't recall. I haven't been by there in a long time. But I think there are still people. I think Union.

Q: Union Township.

Washington: Yeah, Union Township. As long as I can recall, there was always Vauxhall. [Laughter]

Q: What outstanding blacks did you meet or hear in Newark?

Washington: Dr. Phillips, Reverend Means. That's all I can recall right now.

Q: What do you remember about such public servants as the policemen, the fire fighters, social workers?

Washington: When I was growing up? Meaning black policemen or just policemen in general?

Q: Yes, the make up of the police department, the fire department at the time that you grew up, and social workers.

Washington: All white. I felt that they existed, they had special policemen that used to be at special affairs and movies. Other than that, I can't recall many black policemen in Newark.

Q: And how were the citizens treated by the public servants?

Washington: Not very nice, I don't think. Black people were expected to remain in quote, their place. I can recall that they'd get a haircut, they'd rub my head and say give me some luck boy. They call that bigotry.

Q: This would be a public servant?

Washington: Well, could be.

Q: When you or others in the neighborhood got in trouble or needed help to solve a problem, to whom in Newark would you turn to?

Washington: I think I recall there was a district leader. And she would help us solve our problems.

Q: At that time, in what ward would that have been.

Washington: I don't know. At the time I was living on Eighteenth Avenue, near Bergen Street. So I guess that was the Central Ward.

Q: When you were growing up in Newark, how do you think Newark was perceived? Was the community seen as a slum?

Washington: No. I don't think so. At that time, very thriving place. That was the place to be. Cause I think that people wanted to live in Newark. That's where the jobs were.

Q: Exactly what type of jobs?

Washington: We're talking about the, all the stores, factory jobs. I think it ran the whole gambit of jobs that were available during those days. Not for black people, but I mean, that's what, Newark was an industrial place.

Q: Okay.

Washington: But that's where, as I said, at that time, suburbs really hadn't been quote, established. You know, the major cities and places surrounding it, but Newark was the place to be. Particularly this section of Newark was where the Jewish people lived and where the professionals lived.

Q: You're talking about where you live today?

Washington: Yes.

Q: Okay. And this is considered the South Ward of Newark?

Washington: Right.

Q: Okay. What they would consider the Wickwake section?

Washington: Right.

Q: Okay. And that was where most of the Jewish professionals lived?

Washington: Sure.

Q: Okay.

Washington: Because the lower class Jewish people lived in Clinton Hill, close to Avon Avenue.

Q: Okay.

Washington: Jewish lawyers and doctors and store owners lived right here.

Q: And what was considered the people who lived, like say in the Central Ward? Were there many one family homes there?

Washington: No. Significant number of Jewish people lived there too. [voice too low to hear]

Q: True. And what about the West Ward? Do you recall, when you thought about the West Ward, what type of citizens lived there?

Washington: I don't know too much about that. I remember the streets and avenues. That's not a neighborhood we really knew about.

Q: What about the North Ward?

Washington: I don't know anything about that.

Q: East Ward?

Washington: No.

Q: Mainly stayed in your.

Washington: Yeah. Especially since the only means of transportation was public transportation, buses, you know. And very few people had cars. In fact, we used to have a little game playing count the cars that passed the house. [Laughter]

Q: That's how many cars they had.

Washington: We used to have fingers left after an hour, after a half a day.

Q: Okay. Did all classes of African-Americans live close to you when you were growing up?

Washington: Well, I don't know because there was only one other family living there.

Q: So most of your growing up years you lived in communities where the blacks were in the minority?

Washington: Right.

Q: Other than white store owners, Mr. Washington, and other whites with a vested economic interest, do you recall any other whites having an interest in the black community?

Washington: Not that I recall.

Q: Did you shop often in downtown Newark?

Washington: As a teenager?

Q: Yes. Up until the period of the 1970s.



Washington: Yes. When, you know, I wanted to get something special.

Q: Do you remember any special stores that you would shop?

Washington: Yes. Bamberger's, Kresge's, Klein's. Mostly, I think I did more shopping at Klein's than any other place. I could find it a little cheaper there than the others.

Q: At that time what was, which stores were considered to be Newark's best stores?

Washington: Oh. I think Hanes. Hanes, Kresge's, Bamberger's.

Q: Mr. Washington, what incidents involving racial discrimination in Newark have you experienced?

Washington: Oh. Recently or?

Q: During the time up until 1970.

Washington: Okay. I can recall one time at Wickwake Diner I went inside and ordered some cheesecake. The first thing the clerk said, you know this cheesecake cost fifty cents. And I don't think you want to buy it. But I wanted the cheesecake. I had the, yeah I had several dollars in my pocket at the time. And I'm trying to think of the name of the restaurant. It was on the corner of Clinton Avenue and Johnson Avenue.

Q: Peterman. Was it Peterman?

Washington: Peterman. Okay. I went in there and ordered some coffee, and the person gave me a cup so hot that it burned my tongue. I felt that that was not an accident.

Q: Are there any other incidents that you'd like to share?

Washington: Not that I can recall. Oh, I know one other place. I once when I was about ten, I wanted to go with some white people to Olympic Park, you know, it was up in Irvington at the time. And I was told that I wouldn't be welcome there cause I was black.

Q: What do you remember about the Mayor of Springfield Avenue?

END SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE; BEGIN SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

Q: Mr. Washington, what do you remember regarding such local personalities as William Ashby?

Washington: Not very much except I was aware of the name.

Q: Meyer Ellingstein?

Washington: Again, I was aware of his name because he was involved for a very long period of time.

Q: Prosper Brewer?

Washington: I don't recall him.

Q: Irving Turner?

Washington: Irving Turner I recall because he was the premier being type politician. He supposedly the person to see if you wanted to get something done, particularly if you were black.

Q: What do you remember regarding black institutions like hospitals? Any black hospitals in

Newark during the time that you were growing up?

Washington: Not that I can recall.

Q: Any black hotels?

Washington: I'm trying to think of the names of the hotels. One on Court Street, I think. That was a black hotel. I forget the name.

Q: Any black banks?

Washington: [Laughter] No.

Q: Were you ever serviced by any of these institutions?

Washington: No.

Q: Do you recall any individuals who were associated with these institutions?

Washington: What's that banks?

Q: Yeah, black banks or hospitals or hotels?

Washington: Well, I remember a doctor at the hospital. Newark City Hospital or Market Medical Center.

Q: Was this an institution that was owned by blacks?

Washington: No.

Q: But it serviced a lot of black citizens?

Washington: Right.

Q: What do you recall regarding the kind of music that you heard in Newark during your growing up years?

Washington: Well, I guess I heard, as I recall, American music. Predominantly white. And occasionally, Sundays you might hear, I guess, gospel, I guess. I'm trying to think of the station where you could listen to that music on Sunday. But primarily it was the music that they played on the radio.

Q: Do you remember seeing any musicians perform, such as jazz, gospel or blues performance?

Washington: Yes. Like Billie Eckstein, Duke Ellington.

Q: You saw them?

Washington: Yes. Down the Adams.

Q: What was the Adams?

Washington: That was a theater where they had live entertainers, silent movies.

Q: And what type of entertainers would be featured at this establishment? You mentioned.

Washington: Well, the bands, you know, live entertainment.

Q: Well-known artists?

Washington: Yeah, like Billie Eckstein. And I'm trying to think of the others. I can't think of his name now.

Q: Would Sarah Vaughn ever be there?

Washington: I don't recall Sarah Vaughn.

Q: Were there any other places where black musicians were featured?

Washington: We had several places, like bars on Waverly Avenue. I remember seeing Billie Holliday one Sunday as I recall.

Q: In what leisure time activities did you engage? Gardening, movies, playing sports?

Washington: Well, mainly movies. A lit bit of sports, you know, playing in the playground. Basketball and things like that.

Q: Were there many movie theaters in Newark?

Washington: Oh yes.

Q: At the time that you were growing up, were they integrated?

Washington: Some were. Some weren't. I recall that I think it was the Savvoy and the Essex on Springfield Avenue, we had to sit in the balcony. Even the movies downtown, Fox, Paramount, you were allowed to go it, but you had to sit in the balcony. I think the only movie that you could sit anywhere you want to was a movie called the National, which was located on Belmont Avenue.

Q: It was not in the downtown avenue?

Washington: It was Irving Turner Blvd., next to the.

Q: Do you recall what time it was that blacks at that time were able to sit anywhere they wanted to? When it changed where they had to go to the balcony?

Washington: I don't recall. I think it was the 60s, perhaps.

Q: What can you tell us about the Newark Eagles?

Washington: Not very much. Except my father, he was a fan of the Newark Eagles.

Q: What were the Newark Eagles?

Washington: A baseball team. Black baseball team.

Q: Did you attend any of their games?

Washington: I think only one. I recall my father took me there to see the Newark Eagles. That was the only time I can recall going to a game.

Q: Do you know in what part of the city of Newark they were located? The stadium?

Washington: I think it was down the East Ward somewhere.

Q: What do you recall, if anything, regarding the seamy side of black Newark life? Like what places or locations were involved?

Washington: Not that I recall.

Q: Do you recall any black gangsters?

Washington: No. [Laughter]

Q: Now, what do you recall regarding public education in Newark? Since you attended all your education in Newark. In grammar school.

Washington: Well, during grammar school and up to high school, was mostly all white. Teachers were all white. I think there were maybe one or two black teachers. I can't think of the lady's name. First black teacher. But high school, very few of my classmates were black. Southside. The higher you went, juniors, sophomore to junior, that there were very few black people graduating from them.

Q: So during high school too there were still more whites in your class than black?

Washington: Yes.

Q: How well academically did the black students seem to perform?

Washington: Fair. Some we fair, some were poor. I think the poor ones dropped out. Went to technical, or less demanding course, general. At that time we had a course called general course which a lot of blacks got involved with. I started out with a general course and more or less like a basic course. I didn't see it as a challenge at all. And I was transferred to a college preparatory course.

Q: How did that come about?

Washington: Oh I think that my mother, you know, she was more concerned about getting an education. She realized that with a general education course you wouldn't be able to get you very

far. And all my sisters and brothers they got involved with college preparatory courses.

Q: How were you treated by white teachers?

Washington: Some were fair, some were hostile, some really didn't make a difference. And I think on the whole, you know, they didn't think that black people were that smart. They had their ideas about black people. Because they didn't have that much experience with black people. I remember one particular white teacher he didn't particularly care about black people because he had gone to school with Paul Robeson at Rutgers and he never got over the fact that Robeson was smarter than he was. So he had it in for black. Taught Spanish. And I can remember Spanish.

Q: How were you treated by white students?

Washington: So so.

Q: Did you have many white friends?

Washington: Not really. I had some. You know, I don't know whether they were friends, they were acquaintances as it turned out. Friends is a nebulous term. Anybody that you spoke to you considered as a friend. Used to walk to school with white neighbors of mine. We walked to school up to high school.

Q: Did you visit each other's homes?

Washington: Occasionally.

Q: Were your parents and their parents more than neighbors, some friends?

Washington: No. I think just neighbors. You know, they looked out for me if I got involved with



some kind of trouble. They'd say, Andrew, I'm gonna tell your mother.

Q: Okay.

Washington: But that was about it. Either you straighten up or. They would give us different things, you know. We always got clothing and stuff like that.

Q: Okay. Were black students in junior high and high school involved in intramural sports or extracurricular activities?

Washington: Yes. Different sports.

Q: Did you engage in any?

Washington: No. I wasn't involved.

Q: Any special clubs were you involved in in high school?

Washington: No. None in particular.

Q: Mr. Washington, in your opinion, what would you consider to be the five most important events or developments that have occurred in Newark during your residency here?

Washington: I guess one would be the hospital, university hospital being built. Also colleges. I'm trying to think of something else that's significant. I really don't know five things.

Q: Were you involved in any of these developments?

Washington: Not really. I was just aware of them.

Q: Can you remember any particular strikes or elections or riots that may have been?

Washington: Well, I remember as far as the hospital was concerned, they had a lot of demonstrations. People were trying to prevent it from being built because it was displacing people. Sort of hazy now. Oh another event I recall was the rebellion or riots during the 67, when I saw National Guard tanks and policemen with rifles sticking out of their patrol cars. And my daughter at the time was three and she was terrified at the sight. I think to this day she doesn't particularly care about policemen. And also I recall when Gibson became mayor because I helped work his campaign when he was running. In fact, he came to a little like rally next to where I was living. Had some neighbors come around, he spoke. I can't think of anything else.

Q: Since you were born and raised here in Newark, in what major ways has Newark changed?

Washington: How much time do I have?

Q: And how do you view the change that has occurred?

Washington: Okay. I think it changed one way, population wise. The fact that you have more African-Americans, Afro-Americans in the city. Economic wise, economically it's changed that you have a high percentage of people who are less educated living in Newark, which means that they aren't to get involved in some of the more skilled occupations. And you have a high percentage of people who are on public assistance. Also, I think it's changed class wise. That's what we were talking about. Class wise, more people I guess probably refer to the underclass people in Newark disproportionately, and they seem to be lumped together, which isn't true. But in other ways that Newark has changed it has become almost like an education center of New Jersey, and this is sort of unsettling because you have institutions of higher learning next to schools, low performing public schools. Central High School is an outstanding example. The reason I brought up the name of Central because my youngest daughter is a graduate of NJIT, and she tells me some of the things that some of her professors in class that would say about Central

High School which weren't flattering. They didn't know that she lived in Newark. So that way it has changed. I think that also change in our more professional people, blacks, are still living in Newark, but I think they're trying to get out of here as fast as they possibly can. We have to support businesses here, because I recall now that blacks have, they always have funeral homes. They still have this monopoly on this business because people are dying to get their. That's a bad joke. The other thing, I think, well parks. I can recall also skipping back and forth at one of these, I don't play tennis, is that when I was growing up, I lived near Westside Park. I never did see any black people playing tennis. White people played. I used to watch them play, and I was never invited to participate.

Q: Are there any traditions or celebrations, events in Newark that you witnessed in the past that no longer exist?

Washington: Oh yes, I think, I think it was the Thanksgiving parade, Bamberger's parade I used to see. That was a big day and it would go either up or down West Market Street. And all the parades I used to see. In fact, all parades used to be on Broad Street. That used to be a big event, walk down the avenue just to get down to Broad Street to see a parade.

Q: Do you know what happened to them?

Washington: Well, parades, well Veteran's Day, I don't think they stopped that. Now many of the parades are ethnic types, Columbus is Bloomfield Avenue, St. Patrick's is South Orange Avenue, and the Portuguese had at least one.

Q: Okay, so years ago parades were more general. They were on the main street of the city?

Washington: Yes.

Q: And now they seem to be more centrally located in the ethnic group for which they're being, I

guess, represented.

Washington: Right. Columbus Day is on Bloomfield Avenue. Well, I guess it's right up at the Italian center.

Q: When do you feel black life in Newark reached its highest peak?

Washington: In what respects?

Q: In whatever respects that you feel that Newark at that time was really, possibly, a great place to be and reached its highest peak?

Washington: As far as black people were concerned or as far as people were concerned?

Q: Blacks.

Washington: I can't think of anything.

Q: Well, when do you feel black life in Newark reached its lowest peak or point?

Washington: Well, I would say the Newark riots. Because people were destroying, this general destruction really changed the face of Newark.

Q: During the riots, exactly what was destroyed?

Washington: Stores. Mostly businesses. Went wild.

Q: Were these stores or businesses in the downtown area or in the area where the residents lived?

Washington: I guess some of were downtown. But I recall mostly in the South Ward area they destroyed stores. Candy stores, liquor stores. I don't know what reason, they just felt that they could be destroyed. I didn't participate in any of this, but I was aware of it happening.

Q: At the time of the riots were most of the merchants white or black?

Washington: Oh white.

Q: White. Mr. Washington, what do you recall regarding Louise Scott? Did you know her?

Washington: Not personally, but I knew of her. I think she was a business person I recall. I don't know. I just recall the name being mentioned in the newspaper.

Q: What was the community's perception of her?

Washington: I don't know. I can't speak for other people, but I think she was involved in business.

Q: Do you know anything about the High Street area in which the Krueger-Scott Mansion is found?

Washington: No. Not really.

Q: Did you know anyone who worked for any of the families in the High Street area?

Washington: No.

Q: Do you know anything about the occupants of the mansion who preceded Louise Scott?

Washington: No.

Q: Did you know anyone who worked at any of the city breweries?

Washington: No. Of course, I think mainly white people worked there. Those were considered to be good jobs. But I mean, I knew that the Krueger Brewery was on Belmont Avenue. Used to have a statue there.

Q: How would you sum up your experience of living in Newark?

Washington: Well, it's hard because you have to be able to compare with living someplace else. And since I've never lived any other place, I feel that this wasn't the worst thing that could happen being born and raised in Newark compared to anyplace else. So that's fairly upbeat. You know.

Q: Knowing what you know now about life at this age, if you had your life to live over, would you live in Newark?

Washington: Perhaps. Now, I might say that I might question the wisdom of living here from the, through the years I've felt that it wasn't the worst place to be. Because I feel that I was exposed to a lot of different ideas and cultures, but that white people were my neighbors. I perhaps identify more with them than with black people because I didn't know too many black people. And I recall when I was in high school some black people said he talk like he was white. And I don't know the fact that, you know, you're close to New York. You know, taking the train to New York. Do the things that you wanted to do. So, I don't know if I want to live any other place because we always say the grass was greener on some other place. No matter where you live you gotta deal with, you have some problems. And I don't know anyplace where, you know, twenty-four hours a day peace and harmony, 365 days a year.

Q: True.

Washington: Some people say, well, now you know, the south is nice there. California. No

matter where you go, you find that it's what you make out of it.

END OF INTERVIEW